

NPS-09-16-09 Batch 1

USS_AZ_OHC_#341 John V. Gardner_03 of 03
Transcription Date: 09/20/09 - Transcriber: RMR

[BEGIN AUDIO]

MR. DANIEL MARTINEZ: In 1942, your recollection of that visit?

MR. JOHN V. GARDNER: I don't recollect the date at all, but I recollect that I was again on the switchboard over here at three inch Navy a few hundred yards from here and I stood at attention and looking out this door and he said how are you son? And I said fine sir, or very well sir. And it's always a memory and I have to say to you about that, Nimitz lived in the Bay area and I had a traveling sales manager job and I was away at the time that his funeral, but if I had have been there I would have attended Admiral Nimitz's funeral, so help me unless they could have kept me out because I owe my life to Admiral Nimitz and Commander Roquefort. And everybody here does and I think they all appreciate that. We would not be here if it weren't for those two gentlemen.

MDM: How did it make you feel having the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet out here?

JG: Well it was a highlight. Well it was the highest rank officer I ever had that close to me as a 20-year-old kid, 19-year-old kid.

MDM: Make you feel at least this place was a little important, you weren't forgotten?

JG: We knew it was important when he showed up. Yeah. Sure. Sure. You bet.

[technical]

JG: Well I probably took the message. I may have been off the board at all, but the message was in the message book. Many of these and I took a lot of them. And I remember one message that he transmitted to all Batteries, and that's the way they came out, to all Batteries, and one was to the effect there will be no surrender, we'll meet them in the water with fixed bayonets. I do remember that. That was fairly cold, chilling. And I was right there on the edge of the water.

MDM: What deals with that cold steel business doesn't it?

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JG: Yes, back to that cold steel. That's just what he said and I'm sure that's what he meant.

MDM: Well I would like to thank you for the interview, it's been very enlightening and thanks a lot.

JG: My pleasure.

[END AUDIO]